

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, UR, US

SUBJECT: N. V. MOSTOVETS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION

REF: MOSCOW 1970

1. N. V. MOSTOVETS, CHIEF OF THE AMERICAN DESK OF THE INTERNATIONAL SECTION OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE, ON FEBRUARY 11 DISCUSSED WITH POLITICAL COUNSELOR SOME KEY ISSUES AFFECTING SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS (REFTEL). DURING CONVERSATION MOSTOVETS RAISED SUBJECT OF JEWISH EMIGRATION AFTER EXPRESSING INDIGNATION ABOUT JDL ATTACKS ON SMUN AND THE INABILITY OF OUR POLICE TO DEFEND SOVIET OFFICIALS ADEQUATELY. (HE PERSONALLY HAD VISITED THE ROOM AT THE UKRAINIAN MISSION IN NEW YORK INTO WHICH SHOTS HAD BEEN FIRED AND SAID IT WAS JUST LUCK THAT SOMEONE HAD NOT BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED AS A RESULT OF THAT INCIDENT).

2. REGARDING EMIGRATION, MOSTOVETS VOLUNTEERED THE COMMENT THAT MANY SOVIET JEWS EMIGRATED WITHOUT REALLY UNDERSTANDING WHAT THEIR SITUATION WOULD BE LIKE IN THEIR NEW COUNTRY. HE CITED THE DIFFICULTIES MET BY SOVIET IMMIGRANTS TO THE U.S. WHO WERE UNABLE TO MEET PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE, ENGINEERING, ETC., AS OUTLINED IN A RECENT NYT ARTICLE. HE ALSO NOTED THAT MANY JEWISH EMIGRANTS WERE OLD PEOPLE, PENSIONERS, AND

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UNEMPLOYABLES WHO COULD NOT MAKE A LIVING IN THEIR NEW COUNTRY.

WHEN THEIR PERSONAL STORIES BECAME KNOWN HERE, IT WAS ONLY NATURAL THAT OTHER SOVIET CITIZENS BECAME DISCOURAGED AND DECIDED AGAINST FURTHER EMIGRATION.

3. CITING THE CASE OF HIS OWN SON WHO HAD PARTICIPATED FOR EIGHT MONTHS AS A GUIDE IN A SOVIET YOUTH EXHIBITION WHICH HAD TOURED THE U.S., HE SAID THAT SOVIET PEOPLE HAD DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING WHY A SOVIET CITIZEN WOULD WANT TO LEAVE HIS OWN LAND AND SOCIETY. AS ILLUSTRATION OF THIS ALLEGED GULF IN UNDERSTANDING, ANOTHER SOVIET OFFICIAL PRESENT CITED THE CASE OF THE LENINGRAD BALLET DANCERS, THE PANOVs, AND ASSERTED THAT THEY HAD DIFFICULTY GETTING PERMISSION TO EMIGRATE BECAUSE THE WIFE'S MOTHER REFUSED TO LET HER MARRIED DAUGHTER DEPART WITH HER HUSBAND. THIS HAD FINALLY BEEN SETTLED, HE SAID, BUT THE PANOVs HAD EXPERIENCED GREAT DIFFICULTIES IN THE STATES WITH AN IMPRESARIO WHO TRIED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM.

4. MOSTOVETS STATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A GREAT DECREASE IN THE NUMBER OF THOSE WHO WANTED TO EMIGRATE AND THAT THERE WAS NOW A BACKLOG OF ONLY 1,500 WOULD-BE EMIGRANTS. ONLY SECURITY CASES AND PERSONS INVOLVED IN PENAL PROCEEDINGS OR UNDER CONFINEMENT WERE BARRED FROM EMIGRATION, HE SAID. THOSE WHO HAVE HAD ACCESS TO SECURITY INFORMATION HAVE TO TAKE ANOTHER JOB FOR THREE YEARS AND THEN THEY ARE FREE TO GO. BUT MANY HAVE REFUSED TO DO THIS, AND WE ARE CURRENTLY AT AN IMPASSE WITH THEM, HE SAID.

5. MOSTOVETS INDICATED THAT THE SOVIETS WERE CONSIDERING SENDING MORE SOVIET JEWS TO THE UNITED STATES AS MEMBERS OF VARIOUS DELEGATIONS, SINCE IT WAS FELT THAT THEY COULD DEAL WITH MIS-CONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE STATUS OF JEWS IN THE USSR MOST EFFECTIVELY.

6. MOSTOVETS SAID THAT THE PROBLEM OF JEWISH EMIGRATION FROM GEORGIA WAS COMPLICATED BY THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF CORRUPTION AND CRIME. MANY PERSONS HAD BEEN RECENTLY REMOVED FROM THEIR OFFICES AND JOBS BECAUSE OF CORRUPTION, AND MANY WERE INDICTED AND TRIED FOR SUCH ABUSES. HE SAID THAT GEORGIAN JEWS WERE INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM OTHER CITIZENS IN THE REPUBLIC AND ALSO PARTICIPATED IN THE CORRUPTION. THUS, WOULD-BE EMIGRANTS WERE IN MANY CASES INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL AND CORRUPT PRACTICES WHICH RENDERED IMPOSSIBLE OR AT LEAST IMPRACTICAL THEIR DEPARTURE FROM CONFIDENTIAL

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THE USSR. MOSTOVETS EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT THAT RECEIVING COUNTRIES WOULD WANT PERSONS WITH SUCH RECORDS.

7. COMMENT: MOSTOVETS' COMMENTS ARE IN LINE WITH SOVIET PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN ON EMIGRATION AND NEED TO BE PUT INTO PERSPECTIVE. (1) CLAIM ABOUT AGE AND EMPLOYABILITY OF JEWISH EMIGRANTS DOES NOT CORRESPOND WITH ANALYSES OF AGE GROUPS AND OCCUPATIONS PROVIDED BY JEWISH AGENCY FOR ISRAEL IN GENEVA AND TRANSMITTED

REGULARLY BY U.S. MISSION. STATEMENT THAT EMIGRANTS' DIFFICULTIES IN NEW COUNTRIES TEND TO DISCOURAGE EMIGRATION, HOWEVER, DOES COINCIDE WITH ASSESSMENTS OF LOCAL JEWISH SOURCES. (2) CLAIM OF BACKLOG OF ONLY 1,500 WOULD-BE EMIGRANTS, IF TRUE, SHOULD PROBABLY BE VIEWED AS NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS IN PIPELINE, RATHER THAN ABSOLUTE NUMBER WHICH WILL DISAPPEAR WHEN VISAS ISSUED. INTERESTING TO NOTE IN THIS REGARD THAT USA INSTITUTE STAFFER TOLD AMERICAN YOUTH DELEGATION LAST SUMMER THAT ONLY 700-800 APPLICATIONS WERE LEFT TO BE PROCESSED; KOSYGIN TOLD AUSTRALIAN PM WHITLAM IN MID-JANUARY THAT NUMBER WAS 3,000, AND A NOVOYE VREMYA ARTICLE OF JANUARY 31 PUT FIGURE AT 1,420. (3) CLAIM THAT "SECURITY CASES" NEED ONLY TAKE ANOTHER JOB FOR THREE YEARS AND THEN ARE FREE TO EMIGRATE DOES NOT ACCORD WITH WHAT OUR JEWISH SOURCES TELL US. MANY OF THEM HAVE ALREADY WAITED MORE THAN THREE YEARS, WHILE OTHERS REFUSED ON "SECURITY" GROUNDS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LEAVE BEFORE THAT LENGTH OF TIME, APPARENTLY FOR POLITICAL REASONS. DESPITE THESE DISCREPANCIES, MOSTOVETS IS AN AUTHORITATIVE FIGURE, AND HIS COMMENTS WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE SOVIETS INTEND TO HOLD THE LINE ON EMIGRATION AT ITS CURRENT RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL, OR PERHAPS EVEN TO REDUCE IT SOMEWHAT.

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